

The first day, A. shows us the property, teaches the mostly city-slicker trans girls about the indigenous and invasive plants of the area – notably plantain, “white man’s foot.” She shows us how to kill a thistle, where we’ll be working for the day, the limits of the property and the need for care in dealing with the neighbors. We skew heavily towards trans women, though I’m one of the few enbys, and there are a few accomplices among us, because solidarity is as real as it is necessary. And I wonder, as a vegan guest who’s observant of the holiday this year, what kind of burden I place on my hosts? And what kind of Jewish guilt their acts of solidarity inspire in me?

In contrast to stories I’ve heard of kibbutzim and labor zionism, there’s been valuable work in building solidarity with nearby queers not part of this particular project. On Sunday, we head north to a QTIPOC-owned land project and farm. We spend all day there clearing out briars and poison oak, as well as taking brief moments to commune with the land, spending time with the mullein and the madronas. While sitting under one towering madrona, we’re told that the tree predates colonization. It brings to mind the Palestinian olive trees cut down, the work there is to be done, and the work we’re already doing.

In spaces like this, it’s easy to forget how necessary it is to have these kinds of projects. It’s too easy for me to focus on being the only Jew, the twinge of pain when people forget my pronouns, the space between being an enby and being a trans woman. It’s easy to forget the give-and-take of solidarity and that the painful moments are moments to teach and learn. How hard it is to remember that beyond the invisible line of property – and how lucky we are that property is one thing libertarians respect – there are white men with guns with little love for the freaks on the mountaintop.

Sometimes it’s like a white trans woman once told me – that survival is a radical act. Sometime, it’s more important to put my life on the line building solidarity, sanctuary, and self-sufficiency in the most hostile of places.

IV.

What can we learn from the madronas and the olive trees?

[Magpie Liebowitz]

23

Czestochowa/Melbourne/South Hebron Hills
by Jordy Silverstein

In 2016 I went back to Poland for the first time. I landed in Krakow, and then visited Czestochowa, Katowice, Sosnowiec, and Auschwitz. Czestochowa and Sosnowiec are the places where my grandparents, my mother’s parents, once upon a time lived. I learned how to order and pay for train tickets between these places. I took trains, and I walked on the streets.

Krakow felt strangely like home. I gained a new understanding of what it meant that I was a Polish Jew. I wondered what it would have been like if this was my home. I knew myself and my family for the first time as exiles. We rarely say that – that the Jews were exiled from Poland (we can say that, I think, *and also* say that some remained, and some returned, and some went back for the first time).

But Czestochowa. Czestochowa felt both home and alien. There I had the addresses of where my grandfather and his parents and brothers had lived, in 1933 at least: ul. Spadek 3. It’s just down the road from where the main synagogue was (until it was destroyed by the Holocaust), from where the mikvah and where the Jewish school were. But now. Now that space is a car park.



Across the road, on the buildings, were magen davids and 'zyd'. Someone told me that this was a soccer-related insult. The opposition teams are called 'Jews'. Around town, down the main boulevard, were swastikas.



When I walk around Melbourne, where I live in Australia, I generally know how to negotiate space. I know what a dangerous person looks like, I know what I need to fear and what's safe. I travel a bit – interstate and overseas – so I've learned to adapt that skill for new spaces. I know how to get myself around. But in Czechochowa I had a felt, embodied, sense of dis-ease, of out of placeness, of dangerousness, that I had no idea how to navigate. From the swastikas on my grandfather's street, to the man sitting drinking beer at the memorial at the deportation (to Treblinka) site, I had no idea how my Jewish body would be read in this space. I've never felt so profoundly uncomfortable.

And so profoundly angry.

(25)

How can we outlive them when we live on stolen land?

I.

We are cursed, and that curse is ourselves. When we were cursed, it was to wander – not just to wander, but to live forever without rest. And how little rest for the wicked there is. Back then, before the shoah and the nabkha, home was 'in the diaspora' – rather than existing in or as a physical place, home was in each other's hearts. For white Jews, it should be obvious that assimilating into whiteness killed the home in our hearts, building what was left into a number of physically bound structures that gave little respite for our hearts. Israel is a country gripped with an anxiety of othered humans – and here, in the diaspora (and for me specifically, here, in unrecognized Duwamish territory) restless queer Jews move from gentrifying neighborhood to neighborhood, creating vacuums for developers to capitalize on. Our movement need be something different. We need to move from a Jewish guilt like white guilt and white tears to a queer Jewish action that has learned from the pitfalls of radical Zionism.

II.

When the goddess Inanna made her descent to the underworld, her sister Irkalla refused her exit: as the law of the world stated, no man or woman could return from death. And so Inanna's servants – genderless beings, liminal creatures who "know no food, know no drink, eat no flour offering and drink no libation... [who] accept no pleasant gifts... [who] never enjoy the pleasures of the marital embrace, never have any sweet children to kiss" – brought Inanna the "life-giving plant" and "life-giving water." When Irkalla offered them a normal life in exchange for leaving the underworld and Inanna in it, the genderless creatures ignored her and brought Inanna back to the living. What can we as trans people learn from our mythical forebears?

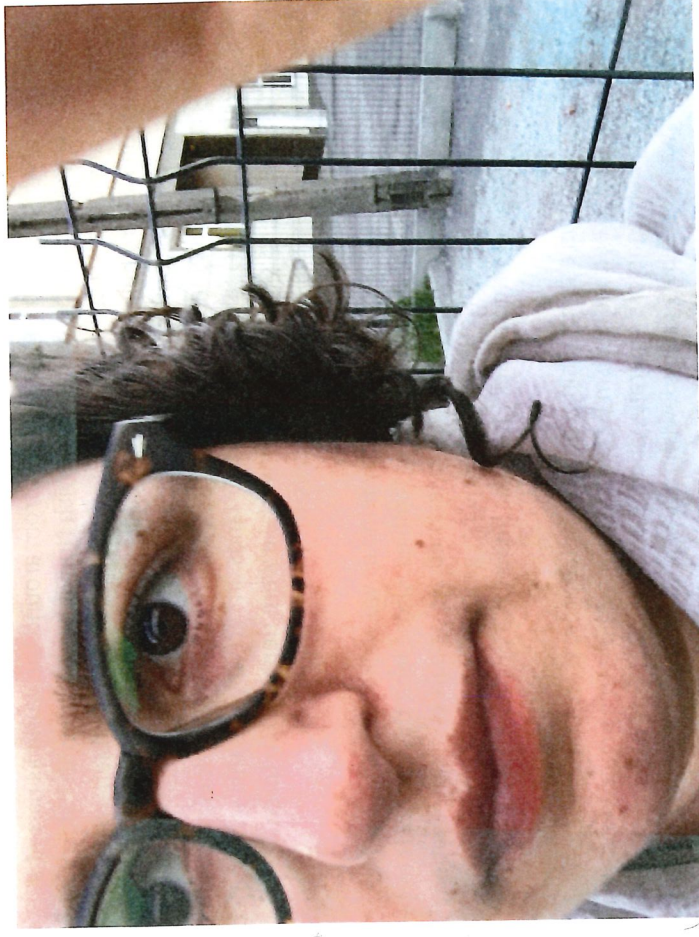
III.

Pesach, 2017. A work party at a land project dedicated to trans women, AMAB trans people, and their accomplices. We're on stolen Takelma land, something we can never rectify, something we should never stop acknowledging.

(22)

It's worth reassessing the history of Sabbatai Tsevi and the Sabbatian movement now, in our apocalyptic moment. Indeed, there are people in academia doing just that, including Paweł Maciejko, Marc David Baer, Ada Rapoport-Albert, and Cenzig Sesman to name a few. And I am not suggesting a spiritual or political return to messianism, but I do think its prevalence in moments of crisis make it worth trying to better understand today.

In closing, a few questions. What human desires does messianism serve? What did it mean for our ancestors? Are there uses of messianism today, even for the non-religious? Are there secular forms of messianic thinking in our lives? Do we feel like we are living at the culmination of something, and on the edge of another? How does that affect how we interact with one other, the planet, and the spiritual beings some of us believe in? What are the political, ethical, and spiritual implications of the urgency that comes with the belief that the collapse of humanity or industrial capitalism or civilization is imminent? And for Jews in particular, what can we learn from the violent rifts within the Jewish community of the 17th century—and the repression of Sabbatianism that followed—and how can they inform our lives today, when our communities are more divided by religion and politics than probably ever before?



I looked around and saw a homogenous populace, a people who looked identical to each other. For the first time I felt that Poland lost when they exiled the (ir) Jews. They lost something when they lost us. They can never get that back. Homogenous societies are the pits. It is their loss.

I went to the church of the Black Madonna, a Catholic holy site in Czestochowa, and the reason why there are so many nuns, priests, and pilgrims in the city. I felt fury that they get to continue to practice their religion, while mine is banished.

I stayed in a hotel which was within the boundaries of where the ghetto had been. Two streets away from where my family had lived. When I realised that I was pleased — I would be so close to the streets they walked. They must have walked down the street I would temporarily live on. I didn't reckon with how haunted that hotel would be. I barely slept.

I know what settler-colonialism is, and I actively fight against it, undermine it, however and wherever I can (at the same time as I live as a coloniser and dispossessor on the lands of Kulin nation). But walking those streets I felt I learned a new type of knowledge of respect for Aboriginal peoples. How the hell do they walk amongst their dispossession every day of their lives? I can't even imagine. Being in Czestochowa taught me something new about resistance, about the burden of living within genocide.

A year later, together with a group of Jews from around the world as part of a delegation organised by the Centre for Jewish Nonviolence, and with Palestinians and Israelis and others, I sat on a bus as we were driven from Bethlehem to the South Hebron Hills, to help the people of Sarura move back onto their lands and reclaim their homes, from settlers, the army, the government, Zionism. In Australia, since the beginnings of colonisation, colonisers have routinely and violently moved Aboriginal peoples off their lands. In recent years this was amped up, and new strategies of capitalism and warfare were deployed to force Aboriginal peoples in the Northern Territory off their homelands.

This was what sat near the forefront of my mind as we walked through the hills, planted Palestinian flags, heard about the families whose land this is, concreted roads and caves, shared meals, talked and learned. Being part of an international, or transnational, or diasporic, or anti-nationalist, group of people coming together to help move people back into their homes is a profound thing.

At a dinner in 2018, in a fancy dining room in Melbourne, with a bunch of academics, I suggested that fascism is rising and something to be concerned about, in Melbourne, across Australia, and internationally. I was scoffed at. Was this what it was like to be a young Jewish radical in Germany in the early 1930s I wondered? I hope I never know. And I suggested that rather than a one state or two state solution, maybe what we need is no states. Maybe nation-states are the inherent problem, and we need to be working for a world with no states. A utopian idea yes, but one with historical grounding. Nation-states are not natural. They can end. But I was howled down by almost everyone present, told that this was dangerous thinking which ignored people's attachments.

But what are people attached to? What are any of us attached to? How can we envision new horizons of attachment, which bring people together and do not rest on exile and displacement and the need for resilience when bearing the brunt of colonialism and genocide? This, it would seem to me, is the utopic question.

In 1665 and 1666 Jews from Yemen to London believed that the messianic age was upon them. People did penance, like meditation, prayer, burying themselves in snow, and whipping themselves with nettles, to cleanse their souls for the messianic moment. Women, children, and men, especially the poor and uneducated, prophesied in the streets, and people listened. Commerce was disrupted as many Jews pulled out of the labor market, selling their property for pennies on the dollar and stopping work to prepare to go to Palestine to be part of the coming historical epoch when Jews would reconquer Jerusalem and Sabbatai would sit over the world as king, savior, and representative of God on earth.

Though widespread, it was a controversial movement, with Jewish communities and authorities deeply divided over Sabbatai's legitimacy. There were violent confrontations between "believers" who embraced him and "heretics" who did not, with nonbelievers forced into silence in some particularly fervent communities. Lines were drawn that would have lasting implications well beyond the 17th century.

At the height of the messianic zeal, Sabbatai was arrested by Ottoman authorities, and given the choice to convert to Islam or die. He converted, took on the name Aziz Mehmed Effendi, and lived for another decade among a small circle of true believers. The spectacle of the Jewish messiah becoming a Muslim had immediate effects on the movement, leading to three general reactions among believers. The first, and most common, was disillusion. Most Jews who had believed in him found Sabbatai's conversion proof that he was either a charlatan or a sick man, but definitely not the savior. Others maintained their belief in Sabbatai's messianic status, but kept their beliefs hidden, living as normal Jews, but with some secret rituals and convictions and allegiances to a secret community of closet Sabbatians. Another set of believers saw Sabbatai's conversion as central to his messianic mission and converted to Islam along with him. In the next century, still others, following another messianic figure named Jacob Frank, converted to Catholicism.

The fallout from the Sabbatian affair was tremendous. Divisions were unveiled within Jewish communities, and Jews who wanted to see more engagement and integration with the non-Jewish world and those who wanted to see less moved further apart than ever. Rabbinic authorities, recognizing the role that popular mysticism played in the spread of the movement, clamped down on the kabbalah, deepening and enforcing restrictions on its study among lay people. The seeds sown by Sabbatianism later blossomed into movements as diverse as Hasidism, Turkish nationalism, the Jewish enlightenment/Haskalah, Zionism, and Yiddish socialism.

Mark Gunnery

In moments of crisis, whether geopolitical or personal, people search for messiahs. These can be religious figures, but don't have to be. The promise of salvation that some find in a Christ others do in political movements, in communities built around shared lifestyles and beliefs, or in conspiracy theories.

Messianism fulfills a human desire to force sense onto chaos, to find direction in despair, and to have a sense of control where one really has none. It satisfies a nihilistic tendency, summed up in the somewhat jokey anarchist slogan "make total destroy." The messianic age means total destruction of earthly oppression and the replacement of earthly power with something more holy, something utopian. The messiah and the apocalypse are inseparable. In times of intense suffering and uncertainty, the urge to topple the systems and people that at least seem to be causing that pain and confusion is heavy.

We are in an apocalyptic moment now, or at least that's how many people feel. Catastrophic weather events are revealing how vulnerable humans are to climate change. There were several weeks recently when nuclear destruction felt closer than it had since the cold war. People's brains are evolving through use of personal technology in ways that seem to confirm the dystopianism of *Black Mirror* and Philip K. Dick. In times like these, with oceans turning to plastic, with fires, floods, and wars creating refugees across the globe, who wouldn't yearn for a utopia?

The 17th century was another time of crisis. The earth was in a period of climate change now known as the Little Ice Age. Global cooling led to environmental, political, and agricultural collapse, with crop failure, starvation, and violence spread across the northern hemisphere. London burned in 1666, fueling already rampant Christian prophecies that the end times would begin that year. Instability and political turmoil led to the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire's global dominance. Between 1648 and 1657, tens of thousands of Eastern European Jews were slaughtered in massacres during Cossack rebellions in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

This is the world that Sabbatai Tsevi emerged onto. He was a rabbi and kabbalist from Smyrna, modern day Izmir, Turkey, who claimed to be the Jewish messiah. He was known for his "strange deeds," actions he took that were decidedly outside normative Jewish practice, like pronouncing the forbidden four letter Hebrew name for God, marrying a Torah scroll, calling women to read from the Torah, and pushing a fish around in a baby stroller to announce that the Piscean age of the messiah had arrived. A movement arose around Sabbatai when he met a young, respected kabbalist named Nathan of Gaza, who also saw him as the redeemer and began dispatching letters to Jewish communities worldwide announcing that their messiah had come.

I am my stripclub's, and my stripclub is mine. Or, God's backside.
[Ariel Levin]

I moved to Iowa last June, and I started working at a strip club in January. Because of my schedule Friday nights have usually been the only ones I can go in. I don't do official Shabbat things on those nights, mostly because I don't normally do those things on Fridays I don't work anyways. But there are times when work routines- washing hair at home, putting outfits into a bag, the drive there, the walk from the front desk to the dressing room, putting on makeup and getting shoes on, the first scan around the floor, wiping down the pole before a set, counting out money for tip outs at the end of an evening- feel like ritual, sometimes even a sacred one.

the routine is one of my favorite parts about working here, along with the money, and the people, and the performing, the words we say to each other at the end of the night despite being exhausted (the kind of exhausted that takes weeks to get over, that sucks at your marrow and leaves your skin feeling transparent), the feeling of being free, and the chance to flaunt the gaps in the mind numbing ideal that seems to get aggressively, cheerfully, violently painted over everywhere and everything here- barns, county fairs, the grocery store, radio lyrics, even leaking into my daydreams- to keep a person from seeing the myriad that doesn't look like American Gothic. To keep people away from, keep people coming to, push people out of places like this.

On Rosh Hashanah I went to services at the closest synagogue, a couple towns over along the interstate from me. It's in the northeast edge of town, the rural edge of suburban. at dinner that night someone said that the shul used to be on a main downtown street in the bigger college town/city, but its zoning got revoked to build condos and a neighboring church they approached to ask about sharing space didn't wanna. The club is on the farthest south edge of a bigger industrial heartland city about half an hour away, right off the interstate next to a truck stop. Both there but as far away and out of sight as possible, a minute away from cornfields, as preferred.

The service was unremarkably bad, the way lots are, but still so remarkable, the way all of the Jewish spaces in Iowa are. In the sanctuary as with most places, I spent a lot of time wondering, worrying if people would greet me so warmly and so unreservedly if they knew I was a stripper. When two old guys started getting the Torah ready to put back in the ark—tugging and fumbling with the cloth, clanking the metal branches back on its handles as an afterthought—I thought how much they could learn from strippers, how much a stripper could teach them about how to carefully, deliberately undress and redress something that has power, and making it look easy and beautiful. Maybe shuls should start saving those roles special for someone who does that for a living, and does it right. Maybe a rabbi (a queer one please) should bring the Torah to a Strip club sometime, roll it out over the stage, let it soak up the blue and violet and red lights and watch it come to life—unfurl on the glossy floor, twirl around the pole in a double set, take up one of the chairs off to the side, wander off to VIP section, leyn to the dancers in the dressing room as they get ready. Maybe we could give a Torah- and the whole Tanach- a real good time. Maybe bubbles and strippers should do a skillshare on spotting and welcoming newcomers, how to pray (have you ever seen a stripper go right up to the edge of the stage when their friend is dancing? All I'm saying is there's a reason Moses gets shown the backside after he asks to see god's full glory), how to entertain guests, how to keep schmoozing even when you're bored and tired and crushed by rejection and secretly wishing everyone would leave so you could too.

The haftarah portion for that service was about the story of Channah and Pinah, two women who share the same husband Elkanah. When I was in middle school my mom bought me three books from the book fair at the synagogue we went to. One of them was a retelling of the story of Channah and Pinah (alas not queer), all about sisterhood and friendship and desire and patriarchy and love, and filled with good sex scenes (think a more trashy biblical version of *Sula*?), as a teen and even now, an old Jewish woman's steamy biblical fanfic helped me find more truth and meaning in that story than the original text or the rabbi's dvar. I think at their best stripclubs can be what that book was to me—a way to give homage, to

What if the moon were our ancestral home?

What might open for us if we—Jews everywhere—understood the connection between our own bodies and land bodies, celestial bodies, as one that negates borders? That makes any concept of ownership moot and irrelevant? What might open for us if we root in moonlight and watch it reflected in the saltwater tears of our own longing?

What might we remember?

I'm reflecting on the embodied nature of songs. The music which poured forth from our throats that weekend shuttled our prayers out into the world, from the Community Sing, to Shabbat Morning Services, to Havdalah, and the easy lilt of niguns that opened workshops and discussions. Music must align with the water in our bodies—all that undulation, that depth of presence. I'm learning that I cannot reach for change in an ungrounded body, and singing has always been one of the first tools I reach for when I need to be rooted.

adrienne maree brown's radiant book *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* seemed to be on everyone's tongues during the Shabbaton, and it was during the Diasporism & Emergent Strategy workshop that I realized once again that this work needs to be fractal—the smallest parts mirror the greater whole, and vice versa. Fractal, and open to possibility. There was such power in reading, against the grain, a text often used to support Zionism—the tale of Jacob's ladder—and creating a multiplicity of diasporic paths through it.

I want to move into deep appreciation for the Shabbat conversation on Judaism beyond Zionism and ending apartheid. The wisdom and insight shared, especially from those of you who have worked at this juncture for decades, moved through me like a river. Thank you, all.

We are at this moment traveling over a leyline between liberation and revelation. Pesach and Shavuot. What does this energy feel like in our bodies? Liberation doesn't mean we automatically know everything there is to know about freedom. Instead, just as we move towards revelation, we have to work towards enacting justice and liberation, decolonizing our minds, bodies, and the land.

May we carry the blessings of our ancestors like cloaks clasped over our shoulders, moon and starlight spinning down.

Dreaming Liberation

A Prayer Poem by Ryn Silverstein

This is a slightly edited and expanded version of a reflection I wrote on the 21st of Iyar 5778 following the first Jewish Voice for Peace Havurah Network Shabbaton gathering at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center on Schatikoike Land, in what is now by colonial authority called Falls Village, Connecticut.

"Queerness is not yet here." —José Estaban Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: the Then and There of Queer Futurity*

I put a lot of faith in dreaming.

As the one seemingly mundane biological state that can be depended on to thoroughly scramble spacetime, no wonder it's so often dismissed as just echoes of the mind's refuse. Easier to cast it aside than to face its thorough challenge to our systems of spatial and temporal organization.

Right now, my brain-heart is beating steadily, casting my dream net to envision a telling that can begin to do justice to our Havurah Shabbaton weekend together.

I keep circling back to Muñoz's utopian conceptualization of queer futurity. "Queerness is not yet here"—such longing! So much possibility for abundance that I read as prayer.

Prayer becomes desire—for immediacy, for authenticity, and for desire itself. Prayer makes room for creativity, imagination, and the erotic, in Audre Lorde's sense of the word, as encompassing deep embodiment and connection.

When we came together that weekend, our very gathering was a prayer. A prayer for Palestinian liberation. For an end to Zionism, and white supremacy. For a Judaism beyond the colonialist confines of the nation-state.

I've been thinking a lot about how the ancestral honoring that opened the retreat wove a canopy of presence over the whole weekend. As I'm writing this, the moon is blooming full—in Scorpio, if you wanted to know—and I'm giving gratitude to the ancestors, particularly those of Jews of color, Mizrahim, and Sephardim, who guided us into the generative, healing darkness of community.

expand (or constrict) what we want, to dissolve the boundaries between what we crave and what we experience, to go inside and outside of ourselves (lech lecha) at the same time.

This is not to say that everything that happens in a stripclub is holy- they're one of the many places where racism, sexism, ableism, fatphobia, classism, transphobia, and so much more are given a seat to relax, actively catered to, serviced, profited off. At first I was surprised by the casual antisemitism there, some of which can make me money ("I love your crazy hair" "ooh what's your ethnicity?") and some of which can't ("sorry I can't get a dance because I kind of a Jew" "wait no way?! Me too!" "No I mean I'm kind of a penny pincher"). Stuff like that makes me miss and want Jewish community so much. I wish I had a shul in walking distance from me (so I don't have to drive while exhausted, that is always scary), one that hosted special services just for sex workers- noon at the earliest, or even just a service where I can feel seen and held up in full. I get lonely and want to be around people the day after, but I always feel too tired and sad to go somewhere. Every night at the club is a fight against the drain and wear of customers constantly asking for, demanding, expecting, more favors, more time, more energy, more work, for free, putting you in the position of having to reject, give in, or swindle them as you think might feel the least terrible and/or make you the most money. I could definitely go for some pastoral + communal care on Saturday mornings.

This isn't to say that what I do at work on Friday nights is pure either. I have never fought a customer or management, never helped another dancer cause a ruckus or bring business as usual to a halt. I have almost always put more effort into making money for myself than getting to know other dancers, almost always kept more for myself than I gave away. I have never tried to put a guy's eyes out with my shoes for the things he has said or done to me or someone else- usually I smile and change the subject, move their hand. Most weeks I sit comfortably on the lap of a bigot, in a shop owned by bigots, in a chair on top of carpet on top of concrete on top of land where at some point people who lived there were forced out and allotment boundaries carved on top of it, maybe multiple times. Sauk,

Meskwaki, Iowa. Calling a place after a river after people you pushed out is one way to come up with a stage name.

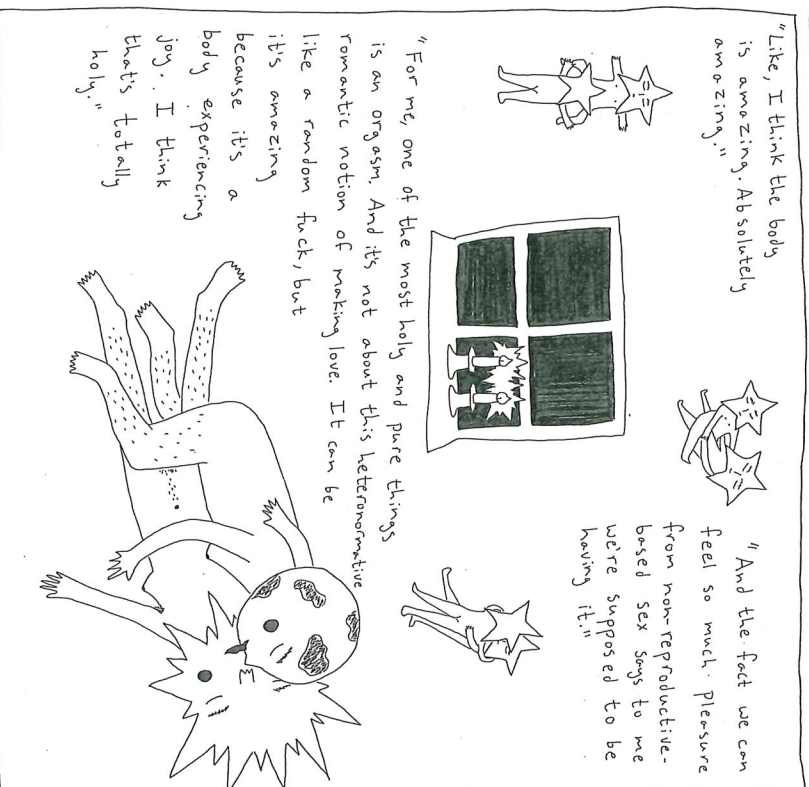
And yet, despite the many harms and wrongs layered on top of and underneath this club and the dangers of lighting candles in a place with so much body spray in the air, I don't think the shekhina would feel unwelcome here. Next to the lockers in the dressing room, in the locked gaze between a dancer and their reflection in the wall mirror, on the back stage where friends teach each other pole tricks on slow nights, a hand on someone else's shoulder, in smoking breaks outside- I think she'd be at home there. I hope she would be. I hope I get touched, can touch others the way we touch bread for motzi, the way we hold cups for kiddish, the way we hold the matchbox right before we strike it with a match. I hope we burn this place (my club, maybe that stifling synagogue too) down, return what's underneath to everything that belongs there, and build something better for ourselves.

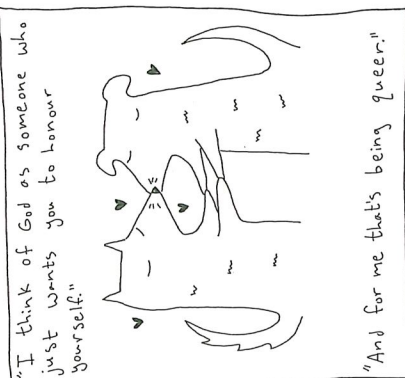
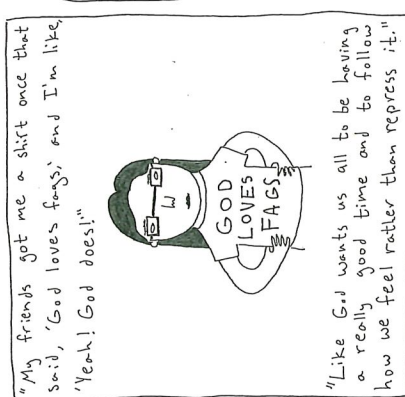
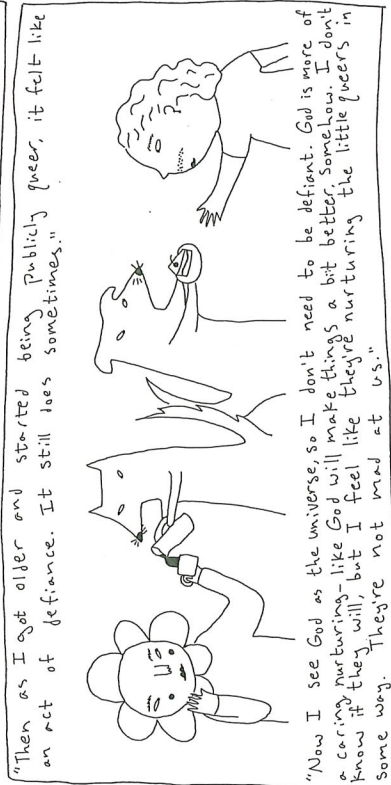
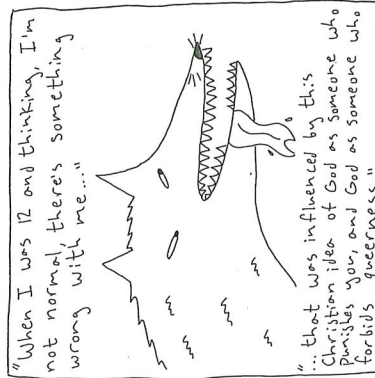
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<https://stjamesinfirmary.org>

<http://swopbehindbars.org>

<http://thirdwavefund.org/sex-workers-giving-circle.html>





Amidah

You ask me to stay silent,
but my voice keeps trembling.

You ask me to stand,
but you know my knees are weak.

You tell me to face east,
and I can't find it to save my life.

You ask me to bow
knowing that I'll fall.

G-d of Sara,
G-d of Rivka,
G-d of Rachel and Leah
G-d of Bilhah and Zilpah,
Shekhinah,
I will praise you in the creaking of my joints.

Rain your mercy, your justice, and your kindness down on us,
Drown us in it if you have to.

My strength, my redeemer, help me push through,
Let the words of my mouth and the meditations
Of my hear be acceptable in your sight.

Let every off key note I sing to praise you resound,
Let every voice join in so loud that I can't hear myself.
Let my voice go hoarse that I might know how to stay silent.

Protect us and bring us peace,
and may we survive them.

Amen.

[Tyler Vile]

Dear Narrow Bridge Community,

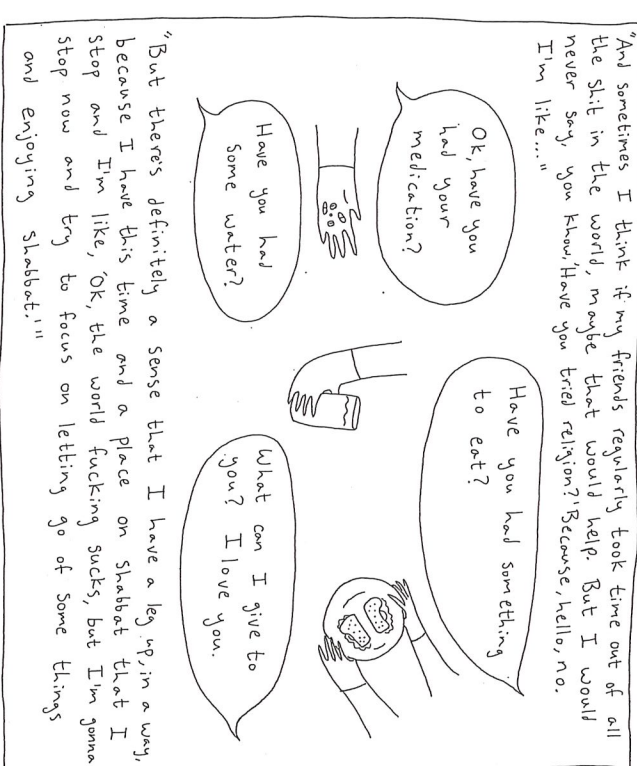
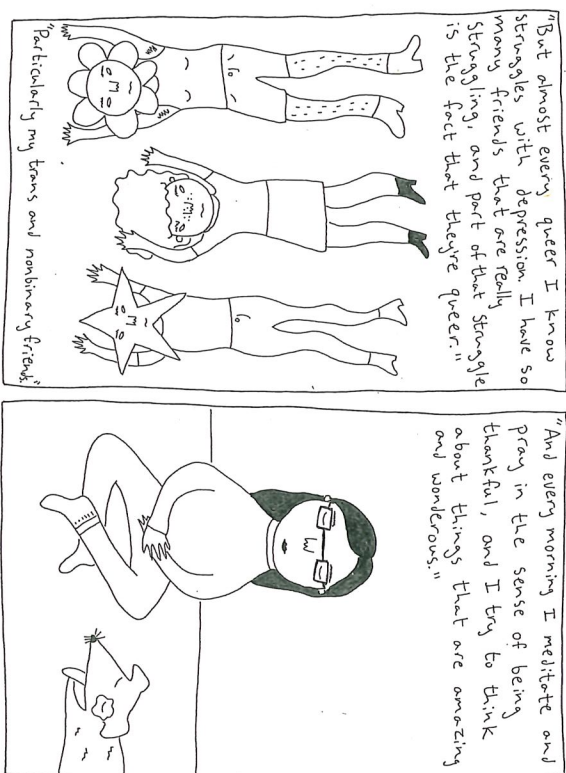
Jonah asked me to speak to the holders I use with their candles.

No matter how much I can acknowledge its incapturability, I still yearn to adequately name the magic that is the confluence of flame, wick, wax and holder. I often don't have words for that matter, especially lately, to explain all that is in me and all the ways these moments move me, when I light one of Jonah's candles. I know my lower belly ignites alongside the fire. I know that's where my dignity begins and I know it grows in all directions through my limbs and extremities. When I feel the spark of flames from a candle so lovingly made by Jonah held in an object so personal, I feel myself sewing a material connection between my own dignity and the inherent dignity in all life.

But what of the inherent dignity in all life, if the forces of power seek to extract it from us? To separate us from ourselves? To separate us from each other and our families - chosen and otherwise - through borders, walls, militarism and imperialism, nationalism, colonization, prisons, genocide...both historical and ongoing? When we live under the conditions of a state and economic apparatus that is predicated on pillaging from communities of color, queer and trans folk, womxn, femmes and gender non-conforming folk, disabled folk, poor folk, and all non-humn species including this earth?...The conditions of which are heightening every day? I don't know how to hold it all in my consciousness sometimes. How can it all be possible? How can it all co-exist alongside each other - and intersect with for that matter too - as it does? Such horror and possibility?

Lately, I've been using these two hag stones (stones with naturally occurring holes through them) that I found on Amah Mutsum land, Pescadero, CA at Ano Nuevo beach with people who I love dearly, spaciously, joyfully and un-self-consciously. We built altars next to the waves with big driftwood branches and kelp so long their bodies were probably as old as the ocean. There was black sand and purple shells. There was a trickling creek and a hand placing mine on the water's tension. There was laughing, running, pushing and falling. We slept and read and leaned against the sanded cliff. And the whiffs of the rotting seal down the way were salty, biting. They came in rhythms with the breeze, alongside unending tones of aliveness. The hag stones...they lay all along the beach. One of my dear ones picked one up, set it in my palm, and told me when I look through it, I can see the world as I want it to be. It felt heavy and light. It was smooth and stratified to the touch.

I want you to know the special electricity that is created when I pair these stones with a candle that I know Jonah dipped towards the vision of sovereignty and self-determination. I want you to know the amazement I experience each time I ignite this flame, each time a new one, with the words and melodies of my ancestors. I want you to know that each time I do this, I get to touch a little bit of freedom.



Below is a blessing I say to myself when I light my candle in hopes it might inspire you in creating your own. May we all touch freedom, in closer and closer proximity across the generations.

Blessing for Lighting this Flame:

(Using writing and translation from Marcia Falk's work in "The Days Between", myself, and with grammatical and translational help from Arielle Tonkin and Jonathan Wittenberg)

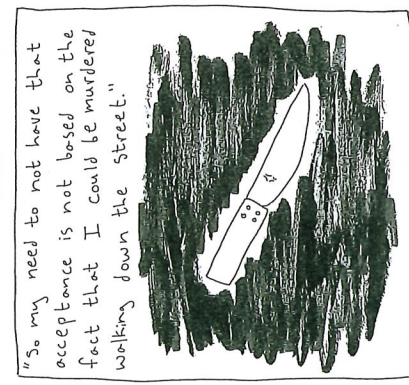
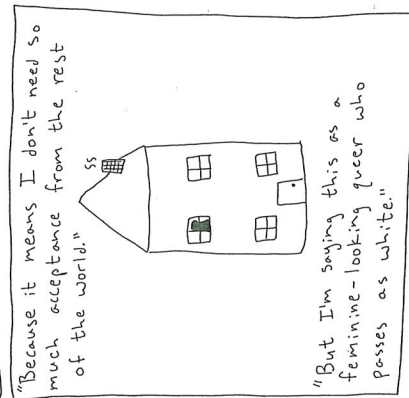
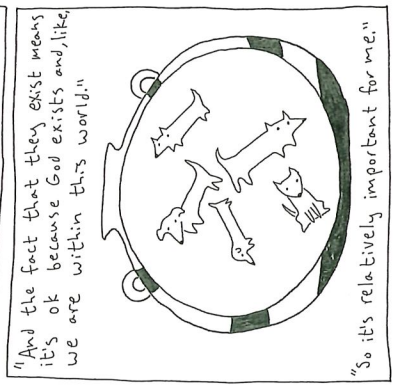
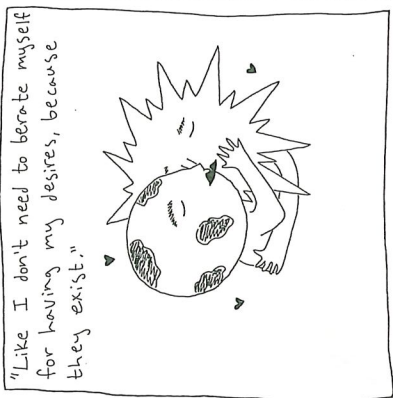
Nevarech et ayn ha-chaim, l'hadlik neyr shel v'tzedek v'shekachah l'ah b'olamah
We bless the source of life, who makes sacred these flames for justice, and our capacity to practice the world we vision into being.



קְבֵר אֶת עֵינֵי
הַחַיִּים
לְתוֹלַד כּוֹ שָׁל
וְאֶדָּק הַשְׁכָּחָה לִי
בְעוֹלָמוֹ

We bless the source of life
who makes sacred these flames for
justice,
and our capacity to practice the world
we vision into being

[Alina Fox]



Crypto-Futures & Quantum Entanglement:

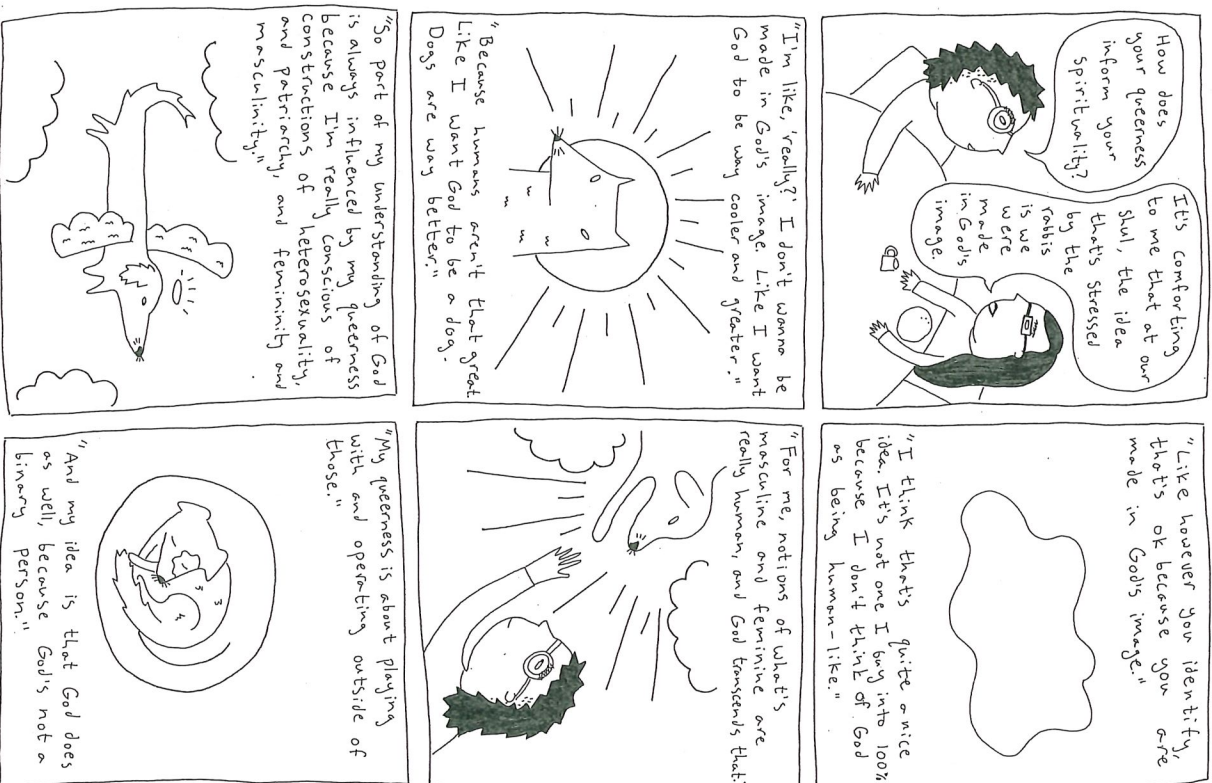
A Thought Experiment in the Form of Preliminary Notes on Lessons from the Anusim

The story in my family goes that, among those we know to be our ancestors—black and indigenous people, farmers and miners—we also exist on this planet as the descendants of Sephardic Jews who, under the extensive and long violence of the Spanish Inquisition, were forcibly converted to Catholicism and subsequently conscripted to assist in colonizing the New World. Anusim. Hebrew for “the forcibly converted.”*

Part of what ensued out of that experience for many of Spain’s Conversos who were exiled or conscripted into the settler-colonial project in what is now known as Latin America, was a widespread practice of *crypto-judaism*—the public performance of Catholic identity and life, combined with the private, hidden, secret practice of continuing with the Jewish faith. To be sure, it was a risky affair, for those who were caught by the offices of the Inquisition as heretics to the Spanish Crown and its Catholic orthodoxy, were imprisoned, tortured, and often killed. Over centuries and many generations, somewhere along the way, many families forgot they had been Jewish, and the conversion project was more or less considered complete. I was raised Catholic, my mother was, as was her’s. The only lingering suggestion of our crypto-judaic past have been in passing comments my mother has made: *once upon a time, we were also Jewish.*⁷

In many corners of Antioquia, there are also tales of how our bodies, our quotidian practices remain haunted by our Jewish past—rituals operating in some kind of palimpsestic assemblage of memory and future-making—the will to remain. Candles lit on Friday evenings; floors swept from outside to in; thirty days of bedrest and chicken soup after childbirth and its labors; a cloth over a mirror and black ribbons tied to the arm after a death. These practices, these choreographies of tradition, manners of habit, in their persistence, I read not merely as ever-disappearing traces of a lost yesterday and its suffocated networks of a community of faith, but as forms of appearance in a praxis of temporal disobedience. An affective archive that is both about generational memory, as well as a material expression of subsequence, of aspirational endurance. Where the Inquisition had sought

[Excerpt from Guidebook to Queer Jewish Spirituality by Mira Schlosberg]



E: Yeah, poor production quality but rich historical value and actually a lot of the people I interviewed for that are no longer living, amazingly.

D: Well we super appreciate you both taking this time to talk with us. I hope that through airing the archives of Beyond the Pale that this younger generation can get more familiar with this history and those conversations. We both super appreciate all the years of work you put into the show and can't wait to share it with a new audience.

M: Thank you both.

E: I'm glad you two are carrying on this work.



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to completely obliterate the Jewish way of life from the Spanish Territory, these habits and their will to remain pose a kind of possibility for thinking the role of the hidden and secret as part of our study in decoloniality: covert paraontologies, if you will.

I am interested in what the cryptological (the logics of the secret and hidden) aspect of converso/anusim life might teach us about survival and futurity under conditions of duress and subjugation. These are preliminary notes on what it might mean to be heretics to the virtually inescapable confines of present-day coloniality, late capitalist realities, and the futures to which they bind us previous to any consent, and long after any dissent is proffered. How can our practices of future-making be strategically hidden in the practices of future-making so fervently co-signed and mandated by those twin forces of capitalism and colonial violence (which are underwritten by Christian cultural dominance, no less)? Under conditions of forced conversion to capitalism, its minute and grand temporal flows, what crypto-futures* can be set into motion, to remain undetected by the destructive and assimilative momentum forcibly conscripting vulnerable populations into genocidal and genocidal trajectories while subjecting them to the total exploitative and extractive violence of planetary destruction? What persistent habits and forms of life will appear in a praxis of temporal disobedience? How is the cultivation of crypto-futures one kind of strategy for a politics that positions modernity's diverse others and their/our very otherness out of sight, and out of grasp from the reach of political, economic, and imaginal discipline, regulation, and subjugation?

In her talked titled, "Undoing the Future—Troubling Time/s, and Ecologies of Nothingness: Re-turning, Re-membering, and Facing the Incalculable" feminist physicist Karen Barad notes that faith in the existence of a singular determinate origin, along with the idea that only one moment exists at a time, is waning.⁵ She traces the material and metaphysical entanglements of our historical present, a relational hauntology that refuses the causal and linear unidirectionality of western temporality. Through spacetime diffraction, a framework of quantum temporality poses the idea that the superposition (not to be here or there, but to be *here-there*.) of all possible histories means all histories are happening at once, not simultaneously but in a co-existence that physicists barely have language for. 1492 could exist inside 1945, and vice versa: multiple violent colonial histories are condensed into this moment, and this moment is condensed with so many other moments in those histories—they exist in *intra-action*, in/as a dynamic

movement of forces exerting upon each other. Further, Barad asks, "what if the ghosts were encountered in the flesh, as iterative materialisations, contingent and specific (agential) reconfigurings of spacetime-matterings, spectral (re)workings without the presumption of erasure, the 'past' repeatedly reconfigured not in the name of setting things right once and for all (what possible calculation could give us that?), but in the continual reopening and unsettling of what might yet be, of what was, and what comes to be?"**

There is something urgent to be thought here-there. Quantum temporal entanglement and these covert paraontologies, the strategies of Anusim ancestors, the resistance of habit and the will to remain, as the hiding of one way of being in the world inside another, or the hiding of a future (or many possible futures) inside another. It cannot be said to be quite schismatic (the theme *is* entanglement) but heretical indeed, against the stronghold of Newtonian Physics, and the Spanish Inquisition's machinery, which over three centuries sought to obliterate the existence of Jewish life in the expanse of Spanish Territory alongside its conquest and conversion project unleashed on black and indigenous populations.

*

In the obscured and shadowy underground, a candle is lit in 1569. It still burns in 1834. And in 2018. And in 2167. How these moments exist one inside the other, happen in co-existence, might be hidden inside each other. The covert paraontological and affective archive which signals to us from the future and its now, or the future-now, also receives our signals, registers the temporal disobedience under way.

The time-space continuum in which capital and coloniality reign are fractured again and again, in the slippage of crypto-futures as diverse configurations of spacetime-matterings, into the recesses and cracks of what otherwise claims to be an inviolate whole. The violence lived in now is not the future to which the now is bound. The end of the world contains so many beginnings inside of it.

There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in. **

Much of our coverage of the far-right when we are on the air was of the Christian right which is still a potent force. But this white nationalist, white supremacist turn, both at home and in Europe... We always had wonderful correspondents who would come on the air to talk about the European far-right but I feel like the current global backlash against immigrants and the rise of nativism globally, we would have been well-positioned to confront it in the context of our previous years of coverage and it would be great to be in the mix on that now.

M: And we were always very critical of Netanyahu but the affinity between the current Israeli government, Netanyahu and Lieberman and so on, to clearly Anti-Semitic regimes such as in Hungary, and to the far-right is way beyond where it was when we were last on the air and we'd certainly be talking about that today.

S: Well if either of you want to dust off your microphones at any point and record something would be more than happy to have it on our show!

M: Be careful what you ask for! -laughter-

S: Are there any particular conversations that stand out? I know it's a big question but when you think about who you spoke with, are there conversations that comes to mind right now? And why is that?

E: One that comes to mind for me Marylin, is Iyad Saraj.

M: Oh yes yes, who's loss is greatly mourned.

E: He's no longer with us but he was a mental health specialist working with children in Gaza and I feel like those interviews were, I mean we covered the atrocities by the Israeli government year in and year out and yet when he would talk about what children were experiencing in Gaza and how it was shaping their bodies and minds and futures, even thinking about it now is just profound to hear...

M: Yeah. And I think too, not on that scale, but we did we did two programs about activist families. One was about the Foners and also the Kagins and the way these families kept alive their radical traditions was very inspiring to me. And I'm thinking too Esther about the shows you mostly produced about the conflicts in Oceanhill-Brownsville that we aired. I think, Treyf it's one of the shows you've gotten copies of.

D: Yep, we were asking specifically for those actually!

D: I'm also interested, because you talked earlier about the role that Jewish Currents had in starting the show, and we recently had the new editor of Jewish Currents on the show. He's a lot younger than the previous people who had been working on Jewish Currents—laughter—and there's a bit of a changing of the guard happening there now that I think is symbolic of a broader change happening in the US Jewish left. And one of the things that we were talking about was the difference in the political approach and the political priorities, if we can talk about there being a generational political difference. And the two issues that seemed like they were at the forefront were Palestine and also questions of capitalism. And I'm curious how you've seen, over the time you were doing the show and since then, how you've seen conversations about these two issues change in the Jewish community or even just on the Jewish left.

E: Well you know, that old generation of Morris Schappes and Henry Foner who were actual communist or communist sympathizers and radical labor union leaders, they were having these radical conversations about capitalism. And then I think there was a generation or two in the middle that stepped back from that. And in that sense we've come full circle and there's probably a lot more kinship between a younger generation now and that older generation whose loss we mourn every day. Marilyn and I were maybe functioning as a bridge between those generations.

D: And a lot has happened in this specific milieu that you were sort of covering for the show. I wonder if the ground has changed so much politically that you find yourself in a different space or talking about things differently? I guess what I'm wondering is if you were hosting the show now, do you think it would look a lot different?

E: I mean every once in a while Marilyn and I ping each other about a piece of news and say 'oh my god, I wish we were going on the air this weekend to talk about this!' Certainly, we never shied away from covering Anti-Semitic outbreaks when we considered them serious threats. Mostly I would say while we are on the air, that included incidents in Europe. And we would also be critical of things being framed as Anti-Semitism that we didn't see as Anti-Semitic. Where Anti-Semitism was being used as a dodge to suppress conversation about Israel and Zionism for example. But this current flowering of Anti-Semitism in the United States, the revival of Neo-Nazism and theories of global Jewish conspiracies of control by bankers and elites that proliferate on the internet and in the highest halls of power at this point, I really do sometimes regret not being on the air to really dig into that and tackle that, to cover it on a regular basis and explain its roots and explain its dangers.

* Contemporary usages of "anusim" refer to victims and survivors of sexual violence, but its use in referring to previous epochs primarily refers to Jews forcibly converted under the thumb of various governing powers.

† In many corners of Antioquia, as in my family, state policies of assimilation into whitened, bourgeois forms of Catholic Christianity have permeated at multiple levels. We have also lost the details of our black and indigenous grandmothers and grandfathers who suffered slavery and genocide. Someday I want to write that history, of how we forgot who were once were; of how the early state policy of pro-miscegenation and the fetishization of racial mixedness in Colombia's project of post-colonial nation-making has been a homogenizing and amnesiac process, of how that process and its afterlives instilled my grandfather with a deep internalized racism that was no doubt, even if subconsciously, exacerbated by the societal racism circulating in everyday life. And I want to write about the political and psychological turmoil of a world historical system that has positioned certain groups as simultaneously victim and perpetrator—how to think ethics and accountability when experiences of both have shaped who we are. How my very life and existence is a confluence of stories, lives lived before me, that were both subjugated by, and subjugators in, the horrific violences of settler colonialism with its technologies of death. How those contradictions murmur and grapple beneath my skin finding voice. That is not this short piece of writing, but neither are the themes irrelevant to the task at hand.

‡ While this term has previously circulated in reference to future markets and cryptocurrency, in its iteration here, I refer to a kind of troubled time, a hidden or secret future that is written, imagined, and lived, inside of and against a future that is legitimated, rendered visible, and imposed by outside forces.

§ March 19, 2018, Columbia University, Roslyn Silver '27 Science Lecture.

** Karen Barad, "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/Continuities, Space/Time Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come", *Derrida Today* 3.2 (2010): 264.

†† Lyric from Leonard Cohen's song "Anthem" on the 1992 album titled "The Future".

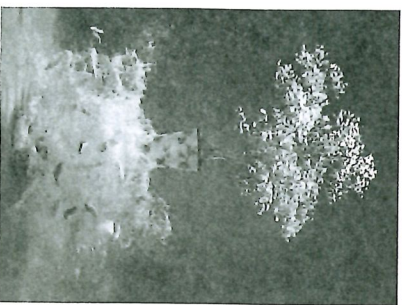
Ascending to Exile:

Why I'm Immigrating to a Breaking Heart

by Erez Jesse Schwartz

"If dispersion is thought not only as a geographical situation but also as an ethical modality,

then dispersion is precisely the principle that must be 'brought home' to Israel/Palestine." - Judith Butler



JERUSALEM - This past year I moved from Chicago and began the process of immigrating to a breaking heart. According to Jewish teaching the city of Jerusalem is said to be the place where G-d laid the foundation stone of the world. The name itself contains the Hebrew word *shalem* (שלם), meaning whole, unified, and at peace.

Today the unification of Jerusalem takes on our political implications as Israel continues to administer its rule over what it claims is the contiguous urban center of the state. Like the land we call Israel today, Al-Quds is nonetheless divided in a rich constellation of beauty, violence, ethnic antagonism, and fractured selves.

I moved to Al-Quds not because it represents the victory of Zionism, but precisely because it persists as a diasporic splinter in the heart of the nationalist state. Against the attempts of Israel to sequester, discipline, and expunge it of the exile, Jerusalem remains a site of lamentation, longing, and shattered vases.

The Jewish concept of *Tikkun Olam* (תיקון עולם) is predicated on this shattering. We are taught that in a first catastrophe known as the Shattering of the Vases (שבירת הברית), G-d poured light into a vessel that could not contain the divine and ruptured into scattered shards like a house window bulldozed in Sheikh Jarrah.

We are taught that repairing the world is the act of gathering these fragments back into a common whole, but another Jewish teaching instructs us that there is nothing more whole than a broken heart. By this measure we should learn to embrace the shattering vase and not the fortified citadel as a vision for the City of G-d.

This is especially fitting considering the Foundation Stone (השתי"ח), described in Jewish mystical tradition as the heart of the world and located in the very center of the Dome of the Rock, is itself punctured and often referred to as the Pierced

M: You know I just remembered Esther, that some years ago there was a conference, something called Jewnity, which was just one of the early activist groups on Israel Palestine, and Melanie was at that conference. And I think it was there that she got the idea of having Jews reject their 'right of return,' in the spirit of burning draft cards back in the Vietnam years, of just sending back the right of return. And that at the time was such a heretical thing to do so that people we thought were allies and were progressives were horrified at the thought of returning their right of return. So at the time it didn't go anywhere. But there has recently been a movement like that among some of the very progressive young Jewish groups.

S: And building on that, how does it feel to see a lot of the issues that you engaged with 20 years ago continue to be issues? Is that heartening? Is that disappointing?

M: -laughter- On the one hand, it's really frustrating! I mean we've had these conversations before, you know it seems as if nothing has changed. On the other hand, when you look over the shows that we've done, when we look over the inventory of shows, one feels incredibly proud to have recognized so many of these issues so many years ago even if in fact things didn't change very much. We did very early shows on the rise of the Christian right, just way back you could see the seeds of Trumpism emerging.

E: And I will also say that there has been progress. For example, our very early coverage of BDS before the term BDS existed. Marilyn, do you remember? The Methodist Church very early on voting to examine potentially removing its investments from Israeli companies?

M: Right, yes.

E: There was a huge backlash against them and we covered that. And it was such a third rail at that time, and not to say that it isn't now, but there is so much more of a public debate and conversation on this front and such a range of institutions beginning to consider these kinds of steps that it really is if not light years away from where we were, at least a few big strides away from where we were. So to not give up hope!

M: And performers and activists are much more open in their rejection of travel to Israel then they were 15 years ago. We hear all the time now about some awardee of a prize in Israel who chooses not to take it or who takes it and then sends the money to a Palestine solidarity organization of one sort or another.

E: I don't think we pulled our punches on getting deep into internal issues within the Jewish community. I'm thinking of when we covered the feminist movement within the Orthodox movement for example. Which is a very inside baseball kind of story. But on the other hand I think we were always very conscious to be translating all of that. We didn't assume our listeners understood that there was an Orthodox and a Conservative and a Reform and a Reconstruction movement within Judaism. There can be a very internal kind of dynamic in the Jewish community where everyone almost talks in code and you easily feel like an outsider for not understanding the alphabet soup of organizations. And that kind of translation work cut through that and made the show accessible to a broad range of Jews and non-Jews.

D: One thing that we were talking about before we started the interview was just how many people were involved in Beyond the Pale. I was reading through the list of regular contributors and hosts on the website before this, and was struck by how many people are no longer with us. Of course just recently Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz passed away. I was wondering if maybe you can talk about what it was like working with Melanie and some of the other folks who were part of Beyond the Pale as well.

M: I was looking through the spreadsheets that we had made up for the archives. And I was stunned to see how many of our comrades had been lost. The most recent losses of course were Melanie and Michael Ratner. But it's really incredible how many of those people are no longer with us.

E: Yeah. And to speak about Melanie in particular, who's loss is extremely present for both of us right now, she was a co-host only in the first few months but she remained on from time to time mostly doing literary interviews over the years, with authors who she admired. And Melanie was always very generous with her admiration and embrace of other writers. But I think that Melanie was someone who really modelled something that I spoke about earlier which is touching on controversial subjects. She was always someone who was ready to stir the pot, pull out the dirty laundry, look at it honestly and air internal debates, air shameful actions by the organized Jewish community. And I think that spirit was present throughout the show. I think that's probably one of the things that kept people glued to the show, especially in times of crisis. I think you would probably agree Marilyn, that we never shied away from being as critical as we needed to be about actions of the Israeli government or actions of the organized Jewish community.

Stone. It is a concrete reminder that at the very center of Jewishness lies fracture, breakage, and dispersion.

Feminist scholars like Judith Butler and Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz articulate this dispersion as part of a broader ethical project that emerges from the conditions of Jewishness. As a diasporic community scattered across national boundaries our people have often occupied the position of refugees, vagrants, migrants, and trespassers.

The circumstances of our lives have therefore demanded an illicit movement across borders and a transgressive intimacy with multiple populations. Diasporism emerges from this as an ethic of fragmentation, cohabitation, and boundary crossing that is at once exquisitely embodied and desperately under threat in Jerusalem.

I moved here not because I wanted to make *aliyah* to the capital of the Jewish state, but because this is where I felt I could most deeply embody a diasporic ethic of engagement across difference and an unapologetic embrace of the other. I moved here precisely because this is a central site where consolidated territorial supremacy needs to be challenged within the Jewish imagination.

I moved here to cross what is sometimes called the Green Line and pass giant red government signs telling me not to enter specific Palestinian townships. I moved here to break discriminatory laws in civil disobedience and build vulnerable community with others committed to sharing a future beyond ethnic nationalism. [<http://www.truth-out.org/speakout/item/38502-why-i-was-detained-in-hebron-last-summer-and-why-you-should-join-me-this-may>]

But no poetic interpretation of Jewish teaching will change the fact that this is a place where Palestinian bodies are literally, not figuratively, shattered by a state determined to unify the city under a regime that does not recognize their personhood. No creative exegesis will stop the brutality of rampaging masculinity that beats Palestinian shop owners in the Old City every year on Jerusalem Day.

I moved here knowing that a breaking heart sometimes builds walls around itself, but we together must struggle toward an exilic future in which the borders are dismantled and Palestinians are also free to move across barriers without checkpoints, barbed wire, and tear gas descending before them. It is time we recognize that only a shattered vase is whole enough to hold all our light.

Biography: Erez Bleicher is an activist, writer, and political commentator living in Jerusalem. He has been involved in various movements for racial, economic, and gender justice and is a member of All That's Left: Anti-Occupation Collective.

Futures as in Water. Futures as in Mikveh. Futures as in Queers.
by Rebekah Erev

What do you want? Do you remember? Because we are here. Here we are, making a home, making a life. In all the mess, in all the histories of being oppressor and oppressed. We are here. We are here as earth bodies. We are here as water bodies. Our atoms are literally made of the same stuff as stars. Our atoms are literally made up of our ancestors. What waters has your body touched? What waters has each of your ancestors touched? What do our water bodies remember? What do we want our collective water bodies to be?

A lot of queering Jewish ritual for me is about relevance. What's relevant is cool, it has allure, you want it. It's a desire to make something your own. Whereas coolness often feels inaccessible, relevance is ultimately about accessibility and resonance. All that time we spent as queers feeling we weren't cool, we didn't belong.

Depending on race and class identity and where we grew up, this can also be very true of our Jewishness. That sense of exclusion has pushed us to make something our own. It sucks that the path to ownership of one's own body and spirit gets so intertwined with capitalism and even within the queer community, feeling that we don't belong. But when we really look at the intention behind the desire, it's to feel empowered and connected to something greater than ourselves. That's a lot of what the Queer Mikveh Project is about.

To us, a queer mikveh welcomes anyone, regardless of spiritual background or not. As Jews in diaspora we want to share and use our ritual practices for healing the land and waters (most of us (but not all! Shout out to all the Native Jews) are visitors on, for the liberation of all beings.

We have come up with this working definition and welcome feedback!

Queer mikveh is a ritual of Jews in diaspora. We believe the way we work for freedom for all beings is by using the gifts of our ancestors for the greatest good. We bring our rituals as gifts. It acknowledges that most of our paths, except for those who are Jews and also Indigenous to the land we live on, is to live on lands that are not historically our peoples. We honor the Indigenous ancestors of the land we live on, doing mikveh as an anti-colonialist ritual for collective and personal liberation.

Queer mikveh is a physical or spiritual space that uses the technologies of water and the Jewish practice of mikveh to mark transitions. Transition to be interpreted by individuals and individual ritual. Queer mikveh in it's essence honors the story of the water. The historical stories of the water we immerse in, the stories of our own bodies as water and the future story we vision. Queer mikveh is accessible physically and spiritually to any and all people who are curious about it. You don't

E: Right. And Jewish Labor history and Jewish feminist history, and I mean I think we very early on had shows about Jewish sex workers, we were always pushing against the politics of respectability I would say.

D: When we started our show it really felt like there wasn't anything in the Jewish media landscape resembling our political orientation or perspective and I'm wondering how it felt being in New York at that time, of how Beyond the Pale fit into a Jewish media landscape.

M: So when we began the show as far as I know and for most of the life of the show, maybe for the entire life of the show, there was really nothing in the progressive Jewish media landscape but this show. Even among those who were say liberal, we were still touching on topics, particularly Israel-Palestine, that were pretty much beyond the pale at the time, and even perhaps today would be as well.

E: But also these perspectives, even within the Jewish Forward or other Jewish publications, many of these perspectives were not even allowed onto the editorial pages of these publications. It's not just that there weren't other progressive Jewish outlets, it's that those voices were quite silenced. And the activist landscape was also far less robust than it is now. JFREJ kind of stood alone. So that voice was missing in a variety of ways, not even just in the media landscape.

And then another important point to make is that as much as our show and your show I think are deeply kindred in their missions, one thing that was different about Beyond the Pale is that we were speaking to the WBAI listenership, which was extremely diverse. And so that listenership certainly included some Jewish listeners but it was not primarily a Jewish listenership. It was primarily a Black and Latino listenership actually. And so we were injecting these conversations and these progressive Jewish perspectives into a broad spectrum of the New York City Left. Some of our most devoted listeners and routine contributors to the show were not Jewish but were extremely grateful to have that perspective, on issues of race in New York and issues of Palestine, just to have that counter perspective was just such a breath of fresh air to so many people outside the Jewish community. And I think that was one of the things that was probably most surprising and delightful about our time on the air there.

S: Have you ever thought about how the show would have been different if the focus was more explicitly on the Jewish community and not the broader WBAI audience?

that there needed to be some kind of counter-voice on the air that was presenting progressive Jewish perspectives.

And so the station manager then, one of the most effective station managers in the history of the station, reached out to what was then the aging team running Jewish Currents magazine, and Henry Foner was on the editorial board at that time. So he and Morris Schappes began a weekly radio program there but it was really hard for them to keep up the relentless pace and so they approached

Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, where I was working at the time, about possibly taking over the show.

So Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz, who was the director of JFREJ at the time, and I went in to meet with [WBAI station manager] Samori Marksman and with then program director Mario Murillo and they signed us up for I think a three-month pilot and then it just kept rolling from there.

And from the very beginning I think the idea was to be critical when necessary of the organized Jewish community, to highlight the presence of Jews within social movements, to bring progressive Jewish perspectives to the key issues of the day. That people needed to hear that there was a robust and complex and lively argument within the Jewish community about how to think about these issues and that there was a strong progressive voice on them. And I would say it was also always also about finding usable progressive Jewish history and conveying that to people who needed that knowledge and were hungry for that knowledge.

M: I joined the show maybe three months in. Melanie took a teaching job and because I had been doing a show on WBAI called EconoNews which was a progressive take on contemporary business events, it occurred to Esther and Melanie that maybe I'd be the person to step into cohort with Esther. But I remember Esther we, for example, we did a lot of letting listeners know about the Bund, and the history the Bund and the concept of Doikayt, of here-ness, of being an activist in your community as opposed to moving to Palestine.

⑤

have to be a practicing Jew to enter queer mikveh. You don't have to be Jewish. Queer mikveh is an earth and water honoring ritual.

Queer mikveh exists whenever a queer person or queers gather to do mikveh. Each person is their own spiritual authority and has the power to create their own ritual for individual or collective healing.

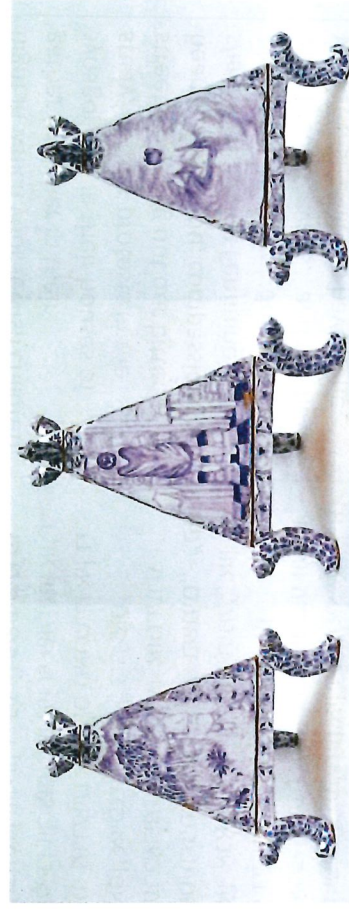
I spent the past year living in Philly, in an attempt to heal my relationship with home and with my family. During that time the United States has brought new levels of oppression to our world. We also have felt and participated in the resistance upwelling, the world of fight, the world of resilience bubbling up, ready to flood white supremacy and the demonic current administration as soon as the pin drops are released from the dam.

This summer I'm collaborating with Alex Rodriguez to do a Queer Mikveh on Lenapehoking, the Jersey shore (everyone's invited) to heal this contentious idea of home, to remember our water bodies abilities to heal, together. Because we live in a time when children are ripped from their families at the U.S. border, Palestinians have been forced out of their homes, we see the rise of houselessness because of economic repression and the prison industrial complex continues to profit from keeping people locked up and away from their homes and families.

We will come together to grieve, keep our visions of a different world alive and focus our work towards liberation and healing using Jewish ancestral rituals.

Our water bodies in collaboration with the seas and skies, are the upwelling revolution.

Segments of this essay are taken from Queer Mikveh Project Instagram and an article published for Jewschool January 2018 called, #TorahForTheResistance: The Queer Mikveh Project



Nicki Green. Three States of Gender Alchemy (three views), 2015. Glazed Earthenware. 23" x 16" x 16"

A *Tkline** for a Time of *Teshuvah* ** & Collective Struggle
to be said immediately after candle-lighting

Yiddish adaptation and English translation by Yoyneh, son of Ester Malkeh

I adapted this from an unattributed *Yom Kippur* candle-lighting *tkhine* found in a folk collection in honor of "Moyres/Teacher" Soreh Rokhl Toyber, daughter of Mayshe Valdman. I write Yiddish liturgy because it allows me to talk to God in a more direct, intimate, and feeling way. I am grateful to my ancestors for giving us the gift of their centuries-old legacy of Yiddish-language prayers (*tkhines*), which were traditionally written for--and often by--Jewish women. As a cis-man entering this genre, I hope to do it humbly, with great *kavod*, respect, for the women who established this field, and to keep listening and figuring out how I can be of service to my community today. I've translated this *tkhine* into English to make it accessible to a wider audience.

Writing this preface on May 16, 2018, gazing broken-heartedly, halfway across the world, at the terrible loss of Palestinian life this week, I think of what a friend said to me back in 2014, during the so-called Operation Protective Edge: "We are going to be doing *Teshuvah* for a long, long time."

So, may this *tkhine* help prepare us just a little bit for the long road ahead, for the true *teshuvah* of word and deed that will lead us closer and closer over the years, back to the Source of All Life.

" <i>Hanares halilu</i> "—these candles I have lit to brighten the terrible night in which your Jewish children gather together in their synagogues, in their houses of study, at their protests in the streets, pouring out our bitter hearts before you, compassionate <i>shekhinah</i> , Divine Feminine. " <i>Habet bishamayim</i> "—"look down from your great heavens," and see how your Jewish children have gone astray and amiss in this broken	הנרות הללו—די דאזיקע ליכט האב איך אנגעצונדען צו באלייכטן די שרעקליכע נאכט אין וועלכן דייןע ייִדעשע קינדער קלייבן זיך צוזאמען אין די שולן און אין די בריי מדרישים און ביים מארשירן אין די גאסן, אויסצוגיסן פֿאַר דיר גאט, דעראַבראָמטעקע שכינה, אונזערע ביטערע הערצער. „הבט בשמים“, קוק דאָך אַראָפּ פֿון דיין גרויסן הימל, און זע ווי דייןע ייִדעשע קינדער זענען פֿאַרבראָנטעט אין אַ צעבראָכענע וועלט, אַזויפֿיל אנגענומען אין דעם נאַציאָנאַליזם און דעם מיליטאַריזם. מיר ווייסן גוט,
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The hosts of the Treyf Podcast at CKUT recently spoke over the phone with the former hosts of Beyond the Pale at WBAI. Treyf started broadcasting in 2015, less than a year after Beyond the Pale went off the air. This is a rough transcript of an edited version of that conversation, originally included in episode 39 of the Treyf Podcast. The conversation was recorded at CKUT in occupied Tio'tia:ke (Montréal) on August 8th 2018.

speaker key:

M = Marilyn Kleinberg-Neimark (*she*)

E = Esther Kaplan (*she*)

S = Sam Bick (*he*)

D = David Zimman (*they*)



M: I'm Marilyn Kleinberg-Neimark and I was, since mid-1995, the co-host with Esther Kaplan of Beyond the Pale, the progressive Jewish radio hour on WBAI in New York. I'm a retired faculty member from the City University of New York, where I taught at Baruch College at the business school. And my most recent project is called Facing the Nakba and it's a curriculum available at the Jewish Voice for Peace website.

E: And I'm Esther Kaplan. It feels well, homely to be on the phone together with you saying that Marilyn, after all those Sunday mornings together. I am an investigative journalist, I run an investigative reporting project called the Investigative Fund at The Nation Institute these days, and for many many years Marilyn and I spent our weekends together doing this show.

D: Well thanks so much to both of you for taking the time to talk with us. I know it was a bit complex to logistically figure out since we're all in very different locales at the moment, but we really appreciate it.

S: So I guess where we want to start is near or around the beginning of the show. Can you give folks a sense of how it came together, who were the players involved at the beginning, and what you were both trying to do?

E: Well we appreciate your interest in the show.

E: So the show aired on WBAI and it came about because WBAI did a lot of live call-ins and it was having issues with a lot of Anti-Semitic statements going out over the airwaves. And there was concern among some of the producers at the station, particularly Jewish producers, that those statements weren't being properly challenged, in some cases by hosts, and

January 7, 2018

On the occasion of the publication of Israel's Boycott, Divestment, & Sanctions (BDS) Blacklist

To my beloved Jews and Dissidents: a love letter

I can either rant, or I can reach deep within my neural synapses to find a new way forward.

FORWARD!

It is with much hope and warmth that I address you. You: the Jews! the Dissidents! the Venn diagram where you converge! You are my sparks of joy, gathered from the corners of the earth; the fire that stays lit under my ass.

For many a fire that fuels my heart was sparked by burning bridges, may we together fan the flames of dissent, to blaze these trails with love currently unrecognizable as primordial ooze.

And too, I write you: my dear Jews who wish to eek out a meager existence, to get by and not ruffle feathers. I see you. Hold your heads high while you hold your heads down: despite edicts; despite pogroms; despite closet doors.

Sometimes, all I know how to do is pull at my hair and sigh, to rip my clothes; I weep choking, constipated tears.

And sometimes I yell: THROW OPEN THE DOORS, HOLD THE FLAME HIGH, CAST NOT SHADOWS, LET IN THE LIGHT

And Reb Cohen z"l would sing: "there is a crack in everything..."

Oh my dear, closeted, dissident Jews:

Winter solstice has passed, and the days grow longer; be the light for all to see

For in diaspora we will thrive

The myth of Zionism is a lie.

Step out from the shadows and cast your light.

Dear Dissident Jews and Jewish Dissidents,

We are the sun, each of us

We must come out, come out,

"...that's how the light gets in."

[Stefanie Brendler]

world, so many of us taking up the flags of nationalism and militarism. We know too well, dear God, that our people, who survived over a thousand years of unbelievable suffering at the hands of antisemitic Christian Europeans, that today our hands are also bloodied, from over seventy years of oppressing the Palestinian people; that not one of us is innocent and without *aveyres*

mitzvah-beyn-odom-u'veyn-khaveyro, transgression against our fellow human being; we know full well that not one of us can have clean hands in such a broken world, a world ruled by racism, patriarchy, Christian hegemony, and Western imperialism. We all have a lot of *tshuveh*, of repentance to do before your holy name, we approach your holy throne with bent heads and trembling lips, weeping on account of our *yerides-ha'doyres*, how we have fallen from the heights of previous generations. We have not forgotten the sacred inheritance of our mothers, a tradition of Bundism, Communism, the struggle for a better world, led by the masses, both Jewish and non-Jewish. May our candle-lighting tonight be in honor of Your holy name and your *matnes-b'khinem*, the gift of this revolutionary inheritance that you graced us with.

ליבער גאָט, אַז אונדזער פֿאַלק, וואָס האָט איבערגעלעבט אַזאַ שרעקליכע, נישט־צוגלויבדיקע יסורים פֿון דער שינאו־ישראל, דורכאויס אונדזערע איבער־טויזענטע יאָרן אין קריסטליכע אייראָפּע, אַז אונדזערע הענט זענען אויך בלוטיק היינט פֿון איבער זיבנסטיק יאָר מצער זײַן דעם פֿאַלסטינישן פֿאַלק; אַז קיינענער פֿון אונדז איז אומשולדיק, אָן קיין עבירה-מצווה בינ־אדם־ובין־חברו, מיר וויסן גוט אַז קיינער פֿון אונדז האָט נישט רייניקע

הענט אין אַזאַ אַ וועלט אַ צעבראָכענע, אַ וועלט בעהערשט געוואָרן פֿון דעם ראַסיזם, פֿון דעם פאַטריאַרקי, פֿון דעם קריסטליכע העגעמאָניע, פֿון דעם מעריב־אימפעריאַליזם. מיר אַלע האָבן פֿיל תשובה צו טאָן פֿאַר דינע הייליקע נאָמען, מיר גייען צו דינע הייליקע טרוין מיט אָנגעבויגענע קעפער, מיט ציטערניש, מיט וויינען מצד אונדזער ירידת־הדורות. מיר האָבן נאָך נישט פֿאַרגעסן דער הייליקער ירושה אונדזערע מאָטערס', אַ מסורה פֿונעם בודיזם, פֿונעם קאָמוניזם, פֿונעם קאָמף פֿאַר אַ שיינערע און בעסערע וועלט, אָנגעפֿירט געוואָרן דורך די מאַסן, סײַ ייִדישע, סײַ נישט־ייִדישע. עס זאָל אונדזערע ליכט־בענטשן היינט בײַ נאַכטס זײַן אין לכבוד דינעם הייליקע נאָמען און דינע מחנה־בריונים, די דאָזיקע ירושה. עס זאָל דער פאָינער די ליכטס' זײַן אַן אָנדענק פֿון דער פֿייערדיקער העלדישקייט פֿון דינע בני־נבאים: עמאָ גאָלדמאַן, קלאַראַ לעמליך, די מירזחישע, „שוואַרצע פֿאַנטערס“, און נאָך אַנדערע, וואָס זורר זייערע מעשים טובים האָסטו אין לעסצטע הונדערט־יאָר

May the candles' fire be a memorial of the fiery heroism of your <i>b'ney-nvuyim</i>, your children who are descended from prophets: Emma Goldman, Clara Lemlich, the Mizrachi Black Panthers and others, through whose good deeds You illuminated the world over the last hundred years, with hope, with love, and with faith that the power to enact <i>tikkun-oylem</i>, the repair of the world, lies in all people's hands, in the hands of people organizing together. We hope that on account of their great merit you will have <i>rakhmones</i>, compassion on your sinful people and that you will remember that it is well past time that unjust suffering—the suffering of your Palestinian children, of your children who are people of color, of your children who belong to the proletariat, of your Jewish children including and particularly your Mizrahi and Sephardi children and your Jewish children of color—that all their suffering should come to an end, through our collective <i>yeshua</i>, salvation. Among our thousands of broken hearts lies my own broken heart, among the rivers of tears which your children pour out tonight before you, my tears also flow. May our sea of tears extinguish Your burning anger; may you demonstrate to us, that as we have not forgotten you, your <i>maysim-</i>	דער וועלט באַשיינט מיט האַפֿטונג, מיט ליבשאַפֿט, מיטן בטחון אַז די כוחות פֿון תקוּן-עולם לייגן נאָך אין אלע מענטשנס' הענט, אין די הענט פֿון מענטשן אָרגאַניזירן צוזאַמען. מיר האָפֿן אַז אלייב זייערע גרויסע זכות זאָלעסטו רחמנות האָבען אויף זיינען זיכדיקן פֿאַלק און וועסט זיך דערמאָנען אַז עס איז שוין צייט—אַז סײַ די צרות זיינע פֿאַרלעטנישע קינדער, סײַ די צרות פֿון זיינע קינדער, מענטשן פֿון קאָלירן, סײַ די צרות פֿון זיינע קינדער אונטער אינעם פֿראַגלעטאָריע, סײַ די צרות פֿון זיינע ייִדישע קינדער, אַרײַנגערעכנט און בפרט זיינע מיזרחישע און ספּרדישע קינדער און זיינע קינדער ייִדן פֿון קאָליר—אַז אַלע די זאָדיקע צרות זאָלן נעמען אַן ענדע, דורך אונדזערע קאָלעקטיווע ישיעה. צווישן די טויזענט צעבראָרעכענע הערצער מיט מיין צעבראָרעכענע האַרצן אויך אַרײַן, צווישן די טייכן טרערן וואָס זיינע קינדער פֿאַרגיסן די נאכט פֿאַר דיר, וועלן זיך אויכט מיינע טרערן אַרײַמישן און די אַלע ימים טרערן וועלן פֿאַרלעשן דײַן צאָרן וואָס ברענט אויף אונדז, דו וועסט אונדז באַווייזן אַז אַזוי ווי מיר האָבן דיר און זיינע מעשׂים רחמים און זיינע הייליקע ברייבאַים עמאַ גאַלומאַן, קללאַרע לעמליך, די מיזרחישע שוואַרצע פאַנטעריס, און דעם קאַמף פֿאַר אַ שענערע און בעסערע וועלט נישט פֿאַרגעסן, האָסטו אונדז אויך נישט פֿאַרגעסן, זאָס מיר זענען נאָך יעצט זיינע געליבעטע קינדער ווי אין פּסוק שטייט, „הבן יקיר לי אפרים,“—אפרים איז מיינער טייערער זון, „דהיית מיין געליבט קינד ווען איך רעדט פֿון זי, רײַסט מיר דאָס האַרץ אויף זי, דערברעט וועל
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For this issue, the theme is Mir veln zey iberlebn — “We will outlive them”: In this issue, Magpie Liebowitz writes “how can we outlive them when we live on stolen land?” This question remains open, and central.

The language of Mir veln zey iberlebn came to me via Hannah Temple of the band Tsibele—Iana Sichel wrote about the history for *Jewniverse*:

In 1939, a group of Hasidic Jews from the Polish city of Lublin were backed up against barbed wire and ordered to sing to their own execution. One of the men began: “Lomir zich iberbetn, iberbetn, iberbetn” — “Let us reconcile...” But nobody joined him.

Then he improvised: “Mir veln zey iberlebn, iberlebn, iberlebn” — “We will outlive them.” An eyewitness at the scene reported: “Instantly the song took hold among the entire people, until it catapulted [them] into a stormy and feverish dance.” The commander at first laughed, historian Moshe Prager writes, but then “he realized they weren’t accommodating him; they were defeating him. He ordered them to stop.” But they continued. Even when the SS troops charged at them, swinging whips and clubs.

Continuing in the vein of previous issues, we asked for writing and art that contends with practical and creative approaches to decolonization (of land, bodies, minds, language etc.), solidarity, (no) borders, anti-nationalism, being in place beyond and against settler colonialism and gentrification, contending with displacement and dispossession, utopian visions, the relationship between decolonizing Jewishness and decolonizing Palestine, envisioning the world we want to see... We particularly asked contributors to think about haunting ancestors, prophetic dreaming, and the world we want to see.

For this issue, we are asking for new ritual, new messiahs, new things to believe in. We are asking you to grapple with nostalgia but move into the future, to face our dybbuks but strive boldly forward. It feels like the end of the world but every ending is a beginning.

JB Brager (2018, written on Lenape territory)

Please get in touch at theyidsarealright@gmail.com

FRIENDS -

The last issue of *Doykeit*, on the theme of “Decolonization,” was published in late October of 2016—right before the U.S. elections and the 45th presidency. I don’t feel prepared to quantify the effects of this event in the context of this zine—certainly the patterns and structures that enabled this election were in place, were always, to an extent, in place. *Doykeit* continues to be a gathering place, a kind of bi-annual-ish yearbook to collect voices that speak to the cross-sections of Jewish and queer identification, and how this may inform anti-Zionist or Palestinian-solidarity politics—and increasingly, a broader project of dreaming. To an extent, I just print what you send me. But also, *Doykeit* has been the conduit by which I return to Jewishness, build community and affinity after being iced out because of my queerness and radicalism. For me, over the seven years I have been making this zine, the stakes feel increasingly higher (not for the zine but for the projects it engages) and bigger.

The concept of “doykeit”—the title of this zine and Yiddish for “hereness”—is taken from the pre-World War II Polish-Jewish group The Bund, who believed that Jews have both a right and a political commitment to live and work for change in the “here and now.” I want to note explicitly that a major shift in my thinking and knowledge since the first issue of this zine is an understanding of settler colonialism particularly in the context of the United States, Canada and Australia. Being a diaspora Jew is not in and of itself a righteous opposition—if we are to be opposed to the colonization of Palestine we must also commit ourselves to decolonial hereness, to live and work for the decolonization of this place. On this subject, I recommend the work of Patrick Wolf and J Kehaulani Kauanui, and the article “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor” by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang. To frame an understanding for the purposes of reading this zine—settler colonialism is a system in which colonists settle and take land, destroying what and who was there before in order to replace them. Patrick Wolfe writes, “settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event”—it is ongoing, it frames everything.

rakhomim, your acts of loving mercy and your holy *b'ney neviyim*, descendants of prophets—Emma Goldman, Clara Lemlich, the Mizrahi Black Panthers—or forgotten our shared struggle for a better world, that so too you have not forgotten us—that we are still your beloved children, as the *Toyreh* says: “*haben yokir li Efraim*,” “Ephraim is my precious son,” meaning, “when I think of my beloved child my heart breaks open, so I will have *rokhmones*, mercy, on them,” so too may God speak about us.

איך אויף זיי רחמנות האָבן, אזוי רעדט
גאָט.

A black and white line drawing of three men in trench coats. The man on the left wears a hat and glasses. The man in the middle has his arms outstretched. The man on the right is adjusting his tie. They are all wearing patterned socks and shoes.